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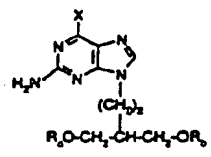
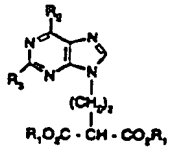


(A)



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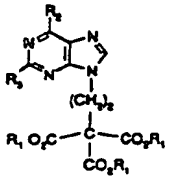

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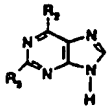

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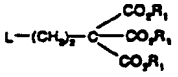

(V)

(57) Abstract

A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (A) wherein: X is hydrogen, hydroxy, chloro, C_{1-6} alkoxy or phenyl C_{1-6} alkoxy; and R_a and R_b are hydrogen, or acyl or phosphate derivatives thereof, which process comprises: (i) the preparation of a compound of formula (I) whereiff R_1 is C_{1-6} alkyl, or phenyl C_{1-6} alkyl in which the phenyl group is optionally substituted; R_2 is hydrogen, hydroxy, chlorine, C_{1-6} alkoxy, phenyl C_{1-6} alkoxy or amino; and R_3 is halogen, C_{1-6} alkylthio, C_{1-6} alkylsulphonyl, azido, an amino group or a protected amino group, which preparation comprises the reaction of a compound of formula (II), wherein R_2 and R_3 are as defined for formula (I) with a compound of formula (V) wherein L is a leaving group and R_1 is as defined for formula (I), to give a compound of formula (VI), and thereafter converting the intermediate compound of formula (VI) to a compound of formula (I) via decarboxylation, and, as necessary or desired, interconverting variables R_1, R_2 and R_3 to further values of R_1, R_2 and R_3; (ii) the conversion of the resulting compound of formula (I) to a compound of formula (A) by converting variable R_3, when other than amino, to amino, reducing the ester groups CO_2R_1 to CH_2OH and optionally forming acyl or phosphate derivatives thereof, and as necessary or desired converting variable R_2 in the compound of formula (I) to variable X in the compound of formula (A); characterised in that R_2 is chloro in formula (I).